

The Pleasant
HISTORY
OF
Tom Ladle;

WITH THE
Transactions of *Peter the Plow-*
man, and Betty his Mother.



Licensed according to Order.

Printed for J. Blane at the Looking-glass on
London-bridge, near the Church,

1800
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1802

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O F

Tom Ladle;

WITH THE
Transactions of *Peter* the Plow-
man and *Betty* his Mother.

A L S O

How *Tom* was Avenged of the Intru-
ding Barber, and also of the intermeddling
Parson.

*Intermeddlers oft prepare
Shame and Derision for their share.*

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CHAP. I.

*How Peter the Plow-man wooed Betty, Tom
Ladle's Mother, with what happened.*

IN the Country lived with a worthy Lady
a Maid-servant, who was more handsome
than rich, her Fortune consisting only
of a good Face; and such small moneys and
cloaths as she had gained in service: The pre-
mises considered, and also well knowing that
it is but slippery holding by Holly Branches,
she resolved to accept the proffers of *Peter* the
Plow-man (who had long suited her) the next
time he should ask her the question. *Peter*
had somewhat more than she, but not much;
yet rather than she would run the hazard of
losing her Teeming time, she would venture
that manner of living (which amongst Love-
toys is but little considered.) The Business was
not long deferred, but upon the first opportuni-
ty he renewed his old suit, and in short time
gained what he long had pursued with little
hopes. They having thus far proceeded, no-
thing

thing was wanting but the consent of the Lady, (who was noble to her Servants that matched with her consent,) but who should ask that question was the question, for she was loth, and he resolved rather to break off the Match, than to go about to speak to the Lady upon any such Errand; for her part she was in long doubt, but recalling to mind all the before-mention'd Considerations, she plac'd up a good heart, early one Morning in her Ladies Chamber, who then was a dressing, where after some pauses, and fluttering of words, she broke the matter to her Lady, who at first seemed amazed (for she judg'd the Wench to deserve a better Fortune) but recovering her Judgment, she answered her with words suitable to the occasion: But the Wench persisting in the suit with much earnestness, her Lady bid her go forward, and feel the smart of her folly; the Wench halting out of the Chamber, said, That she could better endure both the smart and pain all her life long, then she could endure the present itching: which being spoken with a dry simplicity, caus'd all present to laugh.

*The Poor feed Sow little knows
 What the Meat she eats, she owes:
 Even so, pamper'd Wenches will be Wives,
 To leave plebeians quiet for sorry lives.*

C H A P.

CHAP. II.

How Tom's Mother went to Market, where she met with a Gallant, and what happened with Peter's and Betty's Marriage.

LEave being granted, the day of Marriage was soon appointed, and they both judged what was necessary for the solemnizing of that ensuing Feast, saving some small matter that was to be bought at Market, whither she went; as she travelled the Road, it was her Fortune to meet with a neighbouring Gentleman, with whom she falling into discourse, it was agreed to go to his Inn; where they being Arrived, and Chambered, he freely calls for burnt Claret, she not acquainted with its strength, swallowed it down hastily, she thinking the sweetness thereof had been the worst, became thereby so mettled in discourse, and so enflamed in colour, that it added much to her natural parts, and so much to his courage, that at last he began to move her to yield to his desires; at first she seems coy, but he firing some Chase Guns at her Honesty, she but weakly try'd to defend her self against a Man of War, of his Force; in conclusion she was forced to tack a Stern, and strike Sail, and enter into so glorious an Encounter, that the furious Youth well nigh had sunk her in the Ocean of delight.

In

In the end of this Rancounter he became an alter'd Man, for he who but now, even now went on like a Lyon, became more tame than an Ass; then recollecting all the folly past, and that for one moments pleasure, he had run the hazard of losing his Father's Affection who had disinherited his Eldest Brother, for getting a Weach with Child; and he well foresaw, that he must not expect more favour from him on the self same occasion.

*The eager Youth with heat pursues
What he no sooner gain'd, but rues.*

But Betty perceiving the Change, though she knew not the reason, advanced towards him, asking him how he came now so alter'd in his humors, who but even now had enjoyed what he so eagerly desired, to whom he told the reason; whereat she smiled, and said, let not that trouble you, for my business to Market is to buy necessaries for my Marriage, which is to be on *Monday* next, and shall you vouchsafe the pains to come, you shall be heartily welcome. He upon the news recovers his lost courage, and rallies anew, they to their own liking afterwards pursuing the looseness of their wild Affections, where he got her with Child, which the poor Plow-man owned; as afterwards shall appear, he being like many of those who Father anothers Labours to their own disgrace.

The Gallant and she being both weary, and night calling for a return, they by consent pack homewards, and where they met, there they parted much satisfied in their past recreation, vowing to each other a perpetual correspondence, where they shall rest till *Monday*; which day no sooner comes, but all parties concerned hast forward to solemnize the Bridal Feast to which the youngster hastens amongst the rest; to Church they go, Sir *John* opens his Book, proceeds to the half, then calls for moneys, saying he could not trust; some *Peter* gave him, but not enough, which he refuses, whereat the Bride being angry, told him, that the greatest of his labour being wind, if he grudged it so much, he might keep it to cool his Portage, and let so many words be omitted as counter-vailed the wanting part; whereupon the covetous Parson being ashamed, and heartily laughed at, proceeded to the conclusion, and all content, home they went to Dinner.

Table being taken away, some fell to drinking, some to dancing, and others to courting the Maids; of which he was one of the foremost, giving slip to the company, he got the opportunity to be led into the Brides Room, who pretending not to be well, was laid down; the Room was dark, and they thought it easier to pass the time without suspicion, for her Mother had taken the task upon her to answer all demands.

But

*But when Danger's least our fear,
Then is danger oft most near.*

For so then it came to pass; for *Peter* longing to have a kiss of his Bride (unknown to the mother) steals in, whose sudden arrival made the Gamblers begin to shift; but as if Fortune would have it, a short Board being carelessly laid over an empty broken-headed Barrel, upon which he unadvisedly slept, and so fell in, with so hideous a noise, that *Peter* was almost frightened out of the Room, but the care of his Bride so encouraged him, that laying all danger aside, he boldly came to the Bed side, where he found poor *Love* in a Trance and his wife half dead, through the surprisal and fear; he soon knew him, and spared no threatening Language, though in such secret wise, that none else knew ought thereof; the young Man excused her, and generously undertook all the blame, giving the Cuckold some Guinea's, which so eased his mind, that he had almost forgot to keep the Amorous Gallant out of the Trap, who was not a little overjoy'd that he had past so eminent a danger, and brought her out of that fear with so little charge and trouble.

*Few that this Reads, but well doth know,
That Love will creep where it cannot go;
And Women with rich Men may be bold,
For Cuckold's Sight are dim with Gold.*

CHAP. III.

Tom was born, his Mother lost her first Gallant, and how she entertained Cut-beard the Barber, with what happened.

Endeavours, and Time swell'd *Betty's* Belly, who shortly after was delivered of a brave Boy, to whom the Gallant was God-Father, and as became his quality, he gave the Gifts of a well-bred Gentleman; which so endeared *Betty's* Affections towards him, that they were grown even to dotage, and his kindness was in all respects so indulging, that she never doubted their change. But alas! the Sun that shone yesterday, this day is Set, and he to his grief must not only be married, but also live far from the Jewel of his heart, which happen'd so suddenly, that he had not the least opportunity to give *Betty* notice thereof; of which she was sometime ignorant, but no sooner heard thereof, but like a mad woman, she endangered the running out of her wits. But *Cut-beard*, the Barber being a Smell-Smock, and handsome, who all along tendred her his Service, so handled the matter (who under the notice of giving of Physick) had the recourse unto her, that he not only perswades her out of her sorrow, but also got her good will, which he freely possessed with all she had, till *Tom* grew up and went to School.

Tom

Tom being one day come from School, perceived the Barber and his Mother doing something, but what he knew not, nevertheless supposed the thing to be to the disadvantage of his Mother, she being undermost, and contrary to her will, caught up a new mended Latchet out of which stuck a sharp piece of Wood with which he let drive at the Barber's Poniards, and not only wounded him, but made him leave his sport to see what enemy gave him that back blow, when he least dreamed of more Battels to fight, then what he was engaged in; the hasty Barber (not dreaming of ensuing Evil) struck the Boy such a blow on the Ear, that he felled him; which his Mother espying, so foully fell upon the Barber, that with the noise *Peter* came in, who seeing the fray, and the boy crying, made without further examination, the fourth Person, and belaboured poor *Cut-beard*, that with Breeches in hand, he was forced to betake himself homeward both through thick and thin. The Barber gone, and *Peter* return'd, he ask'd the reason of the Quarrel, to whom she said, that he out of his kindness, starting upon a Joint-stool to take down a Cheese, fell, hurt himself and broke down his Breeches, and in the fall hurt the Child for which they were then at Wars; he no sooner hearing that, but said, She did ill to abuse, and cause to be abused a

man that was in no fault, for hastning out of doors, posted after his Neighbour; who having but even now got up his Breeches, and seeing Peter coming after him (fraught with a guilty Conscience) fled like a Hare before the Dog; for he only considered the danger that was behind, and not minding a low Hodge just before him, which he to his sorrow fell over, breaking his Shins, and to amend the matter, fell into a Pond half full of Water, and half full of Puddle, which was just behind the Hodge, in which he doubtless had been drown'd, had not the most charitable Cuckold save him helped him out, home, and to bed, where he lay some time in a bad posture. But in the mean time, many of Tom's Play-fellows hearing his Out-cry, asked the question what the matter was, to which as the time would serve, he answered that he had snit in the Ladle, for which he was whipped; whereat all laughing, called him *Tom Ladle*; which name Winter and Summer he retained all the days of his Life.

*Old love rak'd up, and though in Embers hid,
Will nevertheless all equal power forbid.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

*How the Barber and Betty were reconciled,
how Tom Ladle was revenged on them*

WHAT the Eye sees not, the Heart rues
so fell it out with Peter; for had he known
the truth of the Quarrel, the Devil (de-
less) might have had the Barber e'er he would
have so much urged his Wife to go visit
as he did; through his importunity she
only visits him, but makes a good spiced
led Pudding for him to eat, she knowing be-
bove all things loved that meat. Tom seeing
his Mother so busie, asked her, *What that was*
for? she said, *It was for the Barber*, and so
to fetch a Pot of good Ale to carry with
Tom was full of revenge in his mind,
being beaten, next, being Nick-named, and
had so rancor'd in his little Stomach, that
resolved never to let slip any occasion of re-
quital: wherefore he finding this oppor-
tunity, filled another bag full of T---, took
the Pudding, (which he favourly with his
Trusty Friends afterwards eat) and put the
Sinking Bag into the Pot; she coming in, and
mistrusting nothing less, hastens with the
Concern to the Barber, who being ill at ease
(though he remembered the yesterdays in-
juries) yet received her kindly; but no sooner
had she turn'd out her parboil'd T----, but
there was such a smoking stink, that the Bar-

her concluded that she had brought the same to have poisoned him ; poor *Betty* was so amaz'd, that she could scarcely say any thing in her own defence ; but Necessity has no Law, she must either defend her innocency or run the hazard of being beaten by a half-distracted man ; for he rag'd, and in his fury drew the Bed-staff at her, and was coming out of Bed with the other, to second his endeavours of revenge ; she seeing his intention, closes within him, and throws the wound-
ed Barber on the Floor, and with the Fall breaks his stone Chamber-pot, and so hurts his Back, that the poor Barber was forced to go to Bed half dead and half mad ; but she having got the upper hand in that encounter, by her Protestations clear'd her self of the imputed crime, and for that time left him. The Barber being recovered, he afterwards scurr'd *Tom* up for his Mothers sake, but being not to be decoy'd with Sugar-plums, in his mind proclaimed War against both the Barber and Mother, and resolv'd to break wither their Hams, Hearts, or Necks.

Tom seeing his Mother and the Barber very merry together at the Alehouse, and about to return, creeps into the Barber's shop at a broken Window, and under a parcel of Hair puts some Gunpowder, and by it places the Tinder-box, and so goes to play ; they hit them
home,

home, and he regarding nothing more than to please his Friend, makes haste to strike Fire, but had the ill Fortune to light among the unseen Powder, which blew up with such a career, that he and she thought the Devil had come for them both, the suddenness of the flash so amazed her, that she bewrayed her self so that she was not able to stir for fear of being smelt; but the poor Barber lost all the Hair off his Eye-brows, tumbled back, and broke his best Looking-glass, which cut his head; but alas! that was not all, for there stood in the way a Pan of Charcoal, which in the Fall he touching, fell all upon him, and some of it into his tall Breeches, that e'er he could discharge himself thereof, it burnt through the broad-side; how flesh and blood endured it, that I leave to People that have tasted the like Fiery Trials; but I doubt not but it cooled the heat of both of them, and administered Talk amongst the suspicious, and delight enough to honest Tom Ladle.

*Beware of Tricks, lest you with Tricks be burnt,
Like to him burnt, and she her self be burnt.*

C H A P.

CHAP. V.

How in Process of time Tom growing too confident of his Tricks, was accordingly paid off, and what hapned.

THE Barber (as I said before) and Tom for a long time kept good correspondence, till he, both too full of revenge, and too presumptuous, was caught in his own wile, and beaten for his pains. But going from School home on the Saturday at Noon to Dinner, seeing no one, and hearing some noise (suspecting the matter) peep'd in, and sees his Mother, and the Barber engaged in a Love-duel, which time had taught him better to understand than formerly; which he no sooner sees, but silently and unperceived goes out of the house; all things rest till he went to Catechising, where amongst other young People the Barber was present; it unluckily fell upon Tom's share to be ask'd, *How many Commandments there were?* Tom says, *Nine;* to which, angrily, the Parson said, *How happens that? there was one more;* yea, saith Tom, *there was Ten before the Barber and my Mother broke one of them.* At which Answer ye may all judge how all the people laughed, and the Barber for very shame slunk out of Doors,

and home he goes to *Betty*, and relates the Adventure to her, and withall concludes, that *Tom* had been the Instrument of all foregoing mischiefs; bidding her, during her correcting him, to put the same to him. She perswades her Husband to go to carry a Token to her Lady, that she had provided for that purpose: He accepts of the Message, by which means she had free liberty to call her Son to an Account, who (for his rash Roguery) knew he well deserved it. He cunningly stole to bed, but all in vain, that will not serve poor *Tom*'s turn; the Devil owed him a shame, and he sent his Mother to pay it him. *Tom* being in Bed, and thinking the worst had been past) up comes his Mother, arm'd at all Points with a Birchin Rod, which she exercised upon his blind Cheeks to some purpose: Poor *Tom*, like a fresh-water Souldier, answers all Interrogatories, owning all his past faults, for which he was paid in bloody coin; nor durst he tell stories, though he could scarcely stand or go. But no sooner had he recovered, but he resolved to be revenged, and once more try his Fortunes, which was as followeth. The Barber had a Mare, which he dearly loved, which was big with Foal, under whose Tail *Tom* put a bundle of Nettles, which caused her to winch
 till she had cast her Foal, and was almost

almost dead. The Barber coming home, espying *Tom* upon the run, crys halloo to a muzzl'd Mastive Dog, that he had; who soon overtaking *Tom*, first turn'd him into a Plat of Nettles, and then in a bad condition being got up, and thinking to gain a narrow Gate (the Dog pursuing of him) they were so locked in together, that the Barber had a fair mark at his Breech, which he so pepper'd that *Tom* was forced both to cry mercy for all former deeds, and promise no more to meddle with him.

The Barber seeing his mischievous humor, was resolv'd to be even with him, and turn his malice another way. Wherefore he told the *Parson*, who promised the next time to give him due Correction; which he did, and so slang'd his Breech, that *Tom's* malice was wholly bent to be revenged of him and the Barber at once. Not long after that, the Boys having leave to play, the *Parson* and the Barber went to the next Town to be merry; *Tom* but little, but full of mischief, takes an Apple, cuts it in many pieces, and in each piece puts a crooked Pin, fastened to a Pack-thread, which he threw amongst the greedy Geese, who danced such a dance (that to *Tom's* content) lost all their lives. No sooner he unseen done this, but he goes to a Corn Field, through which they needs must come,

and ties the Heads of the Corn together in many places ; by which means, coming home, they both fell, and the *Barber* broke a luffy Bottle of Ale that was to be carried home for the *Parson's* Wife. The *Parson* swaggered at the misfortune, but the *Barber* told him that it was *Tom Ladd's* Roguery ; and he then believed he must not expect to go free, for his last whipping given to *Tom* ; for his part he had received so many evils from that Curs'd Cur, that he desired not to have more to do with him. They thus walking and fretting, often fell down, till at last they got home ; where no sooner Arrived, but the *Parson's* Children meeting him, told him that they should have Goose Pyes enough, for they were all dead, and hung upon a Rackthread. The *Parson* almost mad, caused the *Barber* heartily to laugh, which so enraged the covetous *Parson* (he being Pot valiant) that he struck the *Barber* such a blow on the Head, that had not the good Wife interposed, there had been much mischief done between them in their Cups, and all through *Tom's* means.

*'Tis not Strength alone that Arms a man,
But Wit, with little Strength conjoin'd can.*

C BAR.

CHAP. V I.

How Tom was beaten, and how he was revenged both of the Barber and the Parson, and all the Scholauers, with what happened.

HE that hath an evil name, is reputed half hanged; so fell it out with Tom, for no Roguery was done in Town, but he was blamed for it. Wherefore he no sooner came to School, but he was soundly jerked, which severe usage, made him busie himself for a revenge. He was much jeer'd for his often being whipt, as also for shitting in the Ladle, by his fellow Scholars, which he stomached extreemly. And therefore one day, when leave was granted to play, and some Boyes busied in Swimming (which was forbidden) others in Robbing of Apple-trees; with several like unlawful Exercises, all which he told to his Master; for which the next Morning there was a general whipping throughout the School. Tom thought himself somewhat satisfied for the injuries done him by them.

School being done, the Parson told the Boys that Tom Ladle was the cause of their whipping; for which he no sooner got out of School, but they seiz'd him, and with a handfull of Nettles, so whipped him, that Tom

was

was glad to make Truce, and Swear by all his Roguery, never to betray them more ; which so long as he was a School-Boy he duly observed.

The Parson and the Barber meeting, laughed heartily at *Tom's* disgrace, but he resolved to pay them off in their own coyn. The Parson and the Barber (for the blows given) had been sometime at variance; but on a Holy-day they agreed to go to Market to be merry, and drink down all ill will. *Tom* having notice of their intentions, prepared for a new revenge, for his last affront done by their contrivance. Wherefore he ties the corner of a sheet to the top of a long Pole, and upon the top place, a small Lanthorn, in which was a Candle; then gets he the Barbers Dog, which he covers over with some old Linnen Cloaths; and places on his back some Squibs and Crackers, and hung at his Tail a Sheeps Bell; in the evening he repairs to a place by which they must needs pass, and there plants himself; it being about two yards from a Gate to which he was tied. All things being ready, and he hearing them come, waits diligently to make every of his contrivances to play its part. Fire being put to every Squib, Cracker, and Serpent; which will burn a certain time eer they discharge their Fury; but to the matter, no

sooner did they appear ; but at the Corner of
 the Hedge he lifts up his Sheet and Lanthorn ;
 saying, Wo to the Drunkards ; they hearing
 the noise, at first started ; but by the snorting
 of their Horses, they supposed it to have been
 some Ghost, as they considered the matter,
Tom threw out a Squib, a Cracker, and a Ser-
 pent, which so frightened their Horses ; that
nolens, volens, they fled till they came at the
 Gate. In the mean time he lets slip the Dog,
 who frightened with the Fire, and Crackers,
 made hast homeward, and ran full tilt a-
 amongst the Horses, who right or wrong broke
 down the Gate, and passed homewards as if
 the Devil had driven them. The Dog pur-
 sued them close, hoping for redress from his
 frightened Master, came so near the Horses,
 that the Barber for fear fell into a swoon, and
 the Parson running but a little farther fell in a
 quag mire ; the smell of their Breeches, left
Tom a scent to find them out the better, who
 coming to the Barber, recovered them out of
 his fears, and made him swear never to come
 near his mother ; then to the Parson he goes,
 who seeing him, cry'd out, *Avoid Satan*. But
Tom heartily laughing aloud, let him know
 his error, the Barber having got his Horse,
 came up and helped the Parson out of the
 Bog, where it was agreed, that *Tom* should
 be silent, and they to be his ever faithful
 Friends.



